

A Baronian

Rue de la Concorde 33 B 1050 Bruxelles T 32 2 512 92 95 F 32 2 512 71 08
Tuesday > Saturday – 12:00 > 6:00 pm
info@albertbaronian.com - www.albertbaronian.com

Press Release

“EXPOSURE: DUSK”, Marie José Burki

Exhibition from 12 January until 16 February 2019

Opening Saturday January 12th, 12-7pm

Dear Albert,

Thank you for offering me an exhibition in your space located rue de la Concorde. My point of departure is a video I filmed quite recently at the Petite Écurie de Versailles where casts of the collections of the École des Beaux-Arts and the Sorbonne of Paris are stored. The premise is the memory of a picture I saw a long time ago in the press; an image of a stack of casts modelled after antiques that are abandoned, and covered in dust. I filmed these damaged replicas whose extremities (fingers, toes, male sexual organs) are often broken. Regardless of their state of conservation, they are now organised, classified: women with women, men with men, the goddesses amongst themselves, the gods amongst themselves. These representations embody stories of combat and violence, of power and strength, of exploits and humiliations, stories of seduction and abandonment, of low blows and blows of bravery; here they are stripped and deprived of all significance. The camera pans from body to matter, from the figure to the dusty and damaged cast. The gaze moves between figure and matter, between the horse head and the stained plaster. We see, we recognise, and then we cannot see anything but a body of sorry-looking and scarred plaster.

Grouped by figures, labelled and wrapped at times in plastic film, the history of the statues' greatness and abandonment is told on their surface. These copies belong to a world that already disappeared at the moment of their conception. I learned that some of them are overprints: copies of copies. What is their relevance today? What do they say about the practice of art, about our culture? Because some of them date from the 17th century, does this mean that the casts are works of art in their own right as some would claim? Does the art coefficient increase with the passage of time? What are these statues? Are they neither archaeological objects, nor art works in the true sense of the word, nor reproductions? Copies, transferrals carried over through time; through their presence they convey the complex question of the passage of the original to the copy, of the model to the reproduction. Circulation of models, images, and techniques make reproductions pervasive in current art practices, so how do we look at these objects when through a few technological manipulations we can reproduce any figure, even in marble?

What preoccupies me is neither the origin nor the decline of each of these pieces, but rather their concentration, the repetition of figures, of faces and bodies, reproduced identically, in the same pose. Paradoxically, the consequences of the passage of time gives them a certain singularity.

Evidently, the patterns of the pose, the patterns of the repetition, the comparison, the slight similarities and differences, the observation of the details interest me. But what captivates me above all is the accumulation of dust, cracks and breaks that speak to the history of humankind, the history of humankind's taste, is the history of time passing by.

Dear Albert, thank you for your trust.

Marie José

Brussels, December 17th 2018

Marie José Burki (b. 1961, Bienne, Switzerland) lives and works in Brussels, Belgium.

Photography, neon, text and video are the preferred media used by Marie José Burki. Using visual devices, her work focuses on creating constantly shifting relationships between static and moving images, which ceaselessly interrogate our perceptions of reality in a world saturated with images. Associated with close observation of the background of daily life, the confrontation of these media contributes to the realization of a 'fixed' temporality, and, by this very means, to an evocation of time as at once real and suspended, accurately reflecting its relationship to the world in which we live. Beyond an almost absent narrative, a description emerges which plays with pictorial and literary codes, questioning the relationship with the pose in the image, along with the concepts of duration, space and perception. The time filmed by Marie José Burki is not social time. Naked and stripped, the time which passes before our slowed gaze makes us reflect in a world saturated by the acceleration of time.

Marie José Burki's work has been presented in solo exhibitions at Kunsthhaus Pasquart, Bienne CH, 2017, Gulbenkian Foundation Lisbon PT, 2017, Centre d'Art Contemporain, Sète FR, 2007, MAC'S Grand Hornu BE, 2003, Camden Art Center London UK., Kunsthalle Bâle (CH), Kunstverein Bonn (DE). Her work appeared in group exhibitions such as Shaping Light - curated by Albert Baronian, Fondation CAB Brussels BE 2018, The Women Behind Museum on the Seam, Jerusalem I, 2018, Private Choices, Centrale For Contemporary Art, Brussels BE, 2017, Rideaux/Blinds, Genève CH, 2015, Le Pont, Musée d'art contemporain Marseille FR, 2014, Néon: who's afraid of red, yellow and blue?, La maison rouge, Paris FR, 2012, Documenta 9 DE).